Sugarcane dues

†3900. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the outstanding amount paid to farmers, so far, by private sugar mills alongwith the amount yet to be paid by such sugar mills to the farmers; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to make the early payment of rest of the outstanding amount?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) An amount of Rs. 6201.11 crores as cane price dues pertaining to 2003-04 sugar season has been paid by the private mills to the farmers, leaving cane price arrears to the tune of Rs.25.63 crores. For the current sugar season, 2004-05 (till 28.2.2005) which closes on 30.9.2005, an amount of Rs. 4687.46 crores has been paid towards cane price payment, leaving an arrear of Rs.581.65 crores.

(b) The responsibility of ensuring timely payment of cane price dues to the sugarcane growers lies with the respective State Governments. The Central Government, on its part, besides, writing to the State Governments for speedy clearance of the cane price dues, have taken the following steps:

(i) The levy obligation of the sugar factories had been reduced to 10% w.e.f. 1st March, 2002, to enable the factories to sell more sugar under non levy quota in the open market.

(ii) A total amount of Rs. 404.66 crores has been disbursed towards maintenance of 20 lakh tonnes of buffer stock by the sugar mills to facilitate liquidity position of the sugar mills enabling them to make payment of cane arrears.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.